

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

In the claims:

Claims 1-26 (Canceled)

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): A composition comprising a purified ~~proteolytic hepatitis C virus (HCV)~~ polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No: 70 ~~wherein said HCV polypeptide comprises an HCV NS3 domain protease or an active HCV NS3 domain protease truncation analog.~~

Claims 28-30 (Canceled).

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): A composition comprising a purified ~~proteolytic hepatitis C virus (HCV)~~ polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No: 86 ~~wherein said HCV polypeptide comprises a fusion protein comprising a fusion partner fused to a HCV NS3 domain protease or to an active HCV NS3 domain protease truncation analog.~~

Claims 32-35 (Canceled).

Claim 36 (Currently Amended): A method for assaying compounds for activity against ~~hepatitis C virus~~ the purified polypeptide of claim 31 comprising the steps of:

- a) providing the purified polypeptide of claim 31 ~~a purified proteolytic HCV polypeptide according to any one of claims 27-35;~~
- b) contacting said purified ~~proteolytic HCV~~ polypeptide with a candidate inhibitory compound in the presence of said peptide substrate; and
- c) measuring the inhibition of the proteolytic activity of said purified ~~proteolytic hepatitis C virus~~ polypeptide.